

REMARKS

This Amendment is submitted in response to the Final Office Action dated April 29, 2005. The Final Office Action allowed claims 1-19, with thanks, but rejected claims 20-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,277,182 issued to Monacos (“Monacos”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,178,171 issued to Alexander, Jr. et al. (“Alexander”). Applicants respectfully request the Examiner’s reconsideration of claims 20-22 and new claims 23 and 24 in light of the following remarks.

Independent claim 20 recites:

A method comprising:
a memory circuit receiving a data frame to be transmitted to a destination device via a switching fabric, wherein the switching fabric comprises a plurality of data ports through which data frames enter or exit the switching fabric, wherein the memory circuit is coupled to the switching fabric via ~~a first pair~~ one or more of the plurality of data ports;
generating and adding routing data to the data frame received by the memory circuit, wherein the routing data identifies one of the plurality of data ports through which the data frame will exit the switching fabric to reach the destination device;
the memory circuit transmitting the received data frame to the switching fabric after the routing data is added to the data frame.

The Final Office Action asserts that Monacos discloses all the limitations of independent claim 20 with the exception of generating and adding routing data to the data frame received by the memory circuit. The Office Action then asserts that this missing limitation may be found in Alexander in column, line 66 to column 3, line 11. Lastly, the Office Action asserts that it would

have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill to combine Monacos and Alexander.

Applicants request the Examiner's reconsideration in light of the following.

For the purposes of this Office Action only, it will be presumed that Monacos is properly combinable with Alexander under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Notwithstanding, the cited sections of Alexander and Monacos fail to teach or fairly suggest all the limitations of independent claim 20. In rejecting independent claim 20, the Office Action asserts that Alexander, column 2 line 66 to column 3 line 11 teaches the act of adding routing information to the data frame received by the memory circuit as set forth in independent claim 20 above. Column 2, line 66 to column 3 line 11 of Alexander sets forth:

In the source-route bridged network, a source routed frame contains a RIF. The RIF includes an ordered list of ring and bridge numbers through which the frames are to pass from the source station to the destination station. Typically, the source station determines the route to the destination station by broadcasting an explorer frame. Bridges add the routing information to the RIF before forwarding the explorer frame. When the explorer frame reaches the destination, the destination station sends a response to the source station. The response contains the complete RIF that the source station then includes in subsequent frames addressed to that destination. Bridges make frame forwarding decisions based on the RIF.

This cited section refers to two distinct frames: explorer frames and subsequent frames. Claim 20 above recites one frame. While this cited section of Alexander teaches adding routing information to a frame, the routing information is not used to identify one of a plurality of data ports through which the same frame will exit a switching fabric as required by independent claim

20. Rather, this cited section of Alexander teaches adding routing information to an “explorer frame.” The routing information added to the explorer frame is not used to identify one of the plurality of data ports through which the explorer frame will exit. Rather, as noted in the cited section of Alexander, each bridge adds unique routing information to the explorer frame until the explorer frame reaches the destination. Thereafter, the destination station sends a response to the source station. In turn, the source station includes in subsequent frames addressed to that destination, the routing information generated by the bridges for the explorer frame. Bridges subsequently make frame forwarding decisions for the subsequent frames based on this routing information. As such, Applicants assert that the cited section of Alexander fail to teach or fairly suggest claim 20’s requirement of “generating and adding routing data to the data frame received by the memory circuit, wherein the routing data identifies one of the plurality of data ports through which the data frame will exit the switching fabric,” either alone or in combination with the other limitations of independent claim 20. As such, Applicants assert that independent claim 20 is patentably distinguishable.

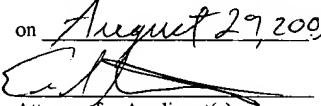
Independent claims 21 and 22 were rejected in the Final Office Action for the same reasons independent claim 21 was rejected. Independent claims 21 and 22 contain limitations similar or identical to that discussed above. As such, Applicants assert that independent claims 21 and 22, like independent claim 20, are likewise patentably distinguishable over the cited sections of Monacos and Alexander.

Applicants have added two new claims. Independent claim 23 recites a circuit configured to generate and add routing data to the data frame received by the buffer. The routing data identifies one of the plurality of data ports through which the data frame will exit the switching fabric. Moreover, the routing data is generated “as a function of data contained within a header

of the data frame.” Clearly, this last limitation is not taught or fairly suggested in the cited sections of Monacos or Alexander. As such, Applicants assert that independent claim 23 is patentably distinguishable over the cited sections of Alexander and Monacos.

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit that all claims are now in condition for allowance, and an early notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop RCE, Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia, 22313-1450,
on August 29, 2005

Attorney for Applicant(s)

8/25/05
Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted,



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